

Appleby Archaeology Group

Notes of the Annual General Meeting of the Appleby Archaeology Group which took place on Thursday January 10th 2019 in the Supper Room, Market Hall, Appleby at 7.00pm.

Present

Committee members: 8

Members of the Group: Approximately 22

Martin Joyce
Chris Wilson
Phyllis Rouston
Trish Shaw
Mick Yates
Adrian Waite

Chairman
Treasurer

Martin Railton
Richard Stevens

Fieldwork/Research
Secretary

Apologies for Absence

None received

Minutes of the last AGM held on 11/01/2018

The minutes had been circulated to all members with the winter Newsletter. There being no errors identified, the minutes were approved by the meeting.

1/2019 Matters arising from the notes

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

2/2019 Chairman's Report

Martin Joyce began his Chairman's report by saying that, in his view, 2018 had been Appleby Archaeology's best year ever. It had started with the celebration of our 20th year of existence and it finished with the award of a Lottery Grant that will enable us to continue the Dig Appleby project for another 3 years. In between we had heard some of the best lectures and enjoyed some of the best field trips that he could recall.

Summing up, Martin said he had many people to thank for these successes, notably Chris Wilson who had taken on the mantle of Treasurer and Membership Secretary, David Boote for his continued hard work as Newsletter Editor and Harry Hawkins for once again saving the day when a scheduled speaker cried off. Most of all, however, he said, he wanted to pay tribute to the work of his colleague Richard Stevens, now retiring from the Committee, who has served Appleby Archaeology tirelessly for so many years, variously as Vice Chairman, Chairman and, latterly, as Secretary – a truly colossal achievement, for which we should all be extremely grateful.

3/2019 Secretary's Report

Richard explained that he had not been able to attend all the talks this year and had been particularly sad to have missed the talk by Ronan Toolis as he tried to convince a number of Cumbrian residents that Rheged had been located in Dumfriesshire.

He went on to say that there were very good turnouts for the summer outings to Patterdale for the rock art & to the beautiful Wreay Church. The visit to Stanwick camp was also reasonably well attended considering that the planned guided trip unfortunately had to be cancelled.

Richard said that we had also replaced our tired old video projector with a nice new high-performance model, thanks to a grant from Cumbria County Council.

Richard offered thanks to Martin Joyce for his work on our new-look website and to Martin Railton for maintaining the Group's presence on Social Media.

Committee meetings have been held 4 times a year to take care of the business of the group, latterly in the Crown and Cushion in Appleby. Reports of most of the talks have appeared in the newsletter & in the Cumberland & Westmorland Herald. He said that, as always, he had tried to keep all the members up to date by email with anything he thought would be of interest.

Finally, Richard explained that this would be his last report as Secretary and that he was retiring to the back benches as of this AGM. He said that he had joined the committee in 2002, soon becoming vice chairman & then had a turn as chairman in 2007 before swapping jobs with Phyl Rouston & becoming secretary in 2012. It had been a great pleasure for him to be involved and especially to see the group progress to where it stands today. He felt that it was going from strength to strength, with outstanding speakers, really well supported day trips and of course, its Appleby research project Digging Deeper and - possibly - even digging deeper still in the future.

He finished by saying that he was sure that whoever took over as secretary would have the same support as he'd had and he wished the committee & indeed the whole group the very best in the future.

4/2019 Treasurer's Report.

Before presenting the accounts for the year, Chris began by reminding the members of the sad passing of Mike Godfrey who had been the Group's treasurer for such a long time and had only stood down at the last AGM.

The accounts for the year to January 2019 were tabled showing an opening balance of £649.36 and, following the receipt of the first tranche of the grant monies from HLF (£24,700,, a closing balance of £ £25,613.01

Chris went on to explain that because Barclays Bank had closed their Appleby Branch, the Committee had decided to move the Group's day-to-day banking to the Appleby branch of the Cumberland Building Society. This is much more convenient for Chris as he has to make frequent cash deposits. The original Barclays account will now be used exclusively to manage Dig Appleby finances.

Chris offered his thanks to Mike Ryan who had reviewed the accounts.

All in all Chris said that this had been a prosperous year for the Group.

Acceptance of the report was proposed by Phyl Rouston, seconded by Harry Hawkins and approved by the meeting.

5/2019 Fieldwork Report

Martin Railton began by explaining the lack of fieldwork in 2018, which had been because of the work which he needed to do to make a new application to the HLF, which as the Chairman had said, was successful.

The first phase of the Dig Appleby Project had been sub-titled 'Breaking the Ground', which was the literal intention – simply to start looking at what was there. The next phase would be called 'Digging Deeper' which would look at the history of the town 'in depth'. The Project would last for three years and a full project plan had been prepared as part of the submission to HLF, this was available on the website for those interested to see what was in store.

Martin said that the first year would be looking at the early Danish settlement of Bongate, the second year at medieval Boroughgate and the Normans and the final year at the early post medieval period.

In addition to excavation, the Project would include research in the archives and on other original sources as well as desk based research on, for example, place names, graveyard surveys and the morphology of the wider landscape using LIDAR technology. The Project

would also look at the economy of the town and the difference in status between the Bongate and Boroughgate settlements. Environmental evidence from test pits and other excavations would tell us much more about the lives of the townspeople from the earliest years.

Martin went on to say that Sir Martin Holdgate, who had written the most recent book on the town, had agreed to help the Project with research.

He said that there had been much interest in the project since the announcement of the successful application to HLF and the first priority was publicity. He was already recruiting volunteers who wished to be part of the Project and the first public event would be a drop-in day at the Appleby TIC on Saturday February 23rd between 10am and 4pm. Following on from that would be geophysical and topological surveys, workshops etc. Every part of the Project would include training and guidance in archaeological techniques, so absolute newcomers to archaeology would be particularly welcome.

6/2019 Election of Officers and Committee members

The Secretary having resigned at this meeting and no nominations having been received, the chair called for a volunteer from the membership to take on the role. The role of Secretary was an important one, being one of the three named Officers of the Group, however no nominations were received from the floor and the matter was left in abeyance. Martin Joyce and Chris Wilson offered themselves for re-election as Chair and Treasurer respectively and the membership approved.

All other members of the present committee, namely Phyllis Rouston, Martin Railton, Trish Shaw, Mick Yates, Adrian Waite and Barbara Blenkinsip all offered themselves for re-election and were approved by the meeting. The chair called for other volunteers from the membership and Cathy Hooper agreed to join the committee as of the date of the meeting.

7/2019 Change to the Constitution

The Chairman explained that during the application to HLF for funding for Dig Appleby Phase 2 it had been necessary to add a sub-clause to the Constitution. This was because HLF required it to be clear that the Appleby Archaeology Group was a 'not for profit' organisation and that this was not stated in our Constitution. Because of the urgent need for the application to be submitted, the Chairman had decided on July 19th to add sub-clause 7E immediately and sort out the approval at this AGM. Consequently, the committee were now asking for approval of the additional text, which is as follows:

Clause 7.

7. FINANCES

A. The financial year shall start in January.

B. Subscriptions shall be levied once a year in January. New members joining in October, November or December will not be expected to renew their subscription until the second January after they join.

C. The Group shall ensure that its subscriptions, grants and other charges payable by members and guests at events are sufficient to meet its debts and liabilities.

D. On the winding up of the Group any assets shall be passed to a similar group operating in Cumbria with compatible objectives.

E. Appleby Archaeology is a "not for profit" organisation and any income generated by its activities will be applied towards its objectives.

The change was proposed by Carol Dougherty, seconded by Phyl Rouston and approved by the meeting.

8/2019 AOB

The Chairman explained to the membership that the committee had decided to increase the visitor's fee for meetings from £3 to £4 in order to 'encourage' visitors to join the Group

He asked the meeting if there were any objections, there were none..

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.25pm.

Following the meeting, the attendees enjoyed a presentation by the Red Wyvern re-enactors who entertained the members with a medieval Christmas in Appleby.

Richard Stevens 25th January 2019